IN THE CLAIMS

1. **(previously amended)** A method of selecting a resource for a work item, comprising:

determining available resources that possess skills needed by the work item;

for each of the determined resources, determining a business value of having the resource service the work item, the business value being a measure of qualification of the resource for servicing the work item based on skills of the resource and skill requirements of the work item;

for each of the determined resources, determining a value to the resource of servicing the work item, the value to the resource being a measure of how the resource is spending time compared with other resources and goals of the individual resource; and

selecting a determined resource that has a best combined value of the business value and the value to the resource, to serve the work item.

2. **(original)** The method of claim 1 wherein:

determining a business value comprises

determining the business value weighted by a business value weight corresponding to the work item;

determining a value to the resource comprises

determining the value to the resource weighted by a resource value weight corresponding to the work item; and

selecting comprises

selecting a determined resource that has a best combined value of the weighted business value and the weighted value to the resource.

3. **(original)** The method of claim 2 wherein:

determining a business value comprises

determining a weighted business value as a product of (a) the

business value weight corresponding to the work item and (b) a sum of products of a level of each said needed skill of the resource and a weight of said needed skill of the work item; and

determining a value to the resource comprises

determining a weighted resource treatment value as a product of (c) a resource treatment weight corresponding to the work item and (d) a sum of products of each treatment of the resource and a weight of said treatment of the resource.

4. **(original)** The method of claim 3 wherein:

the sums of products are scaled sums, and

the treatments are scaled treatments.

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5. **(original)** The method of claim 4 wherein:

selecting comprises

selecting the determined resource that has a highest sum of the weighted business value and the weighted resource treatment value.

6. **(original)** The method of claim 3 wherein:

the resource treatments of a resource comprise a time since the resource became available and a time that the resource has not spent serving work items.

7. **(original)** The method of claim 6 wherein:

the treatments of the resource further comprise a measure of an effect that serving of the work item would have on a goal of the resource.

8. **(original)** The method of claim 7 wherein:

the measure of the effect comprises a difference between (a) a distance of an actual allocation of worktime of the resource among skills from a goal allocation of the worktime of the resource among the skills and

(b) a distance of an estimated allocation of the worktime of the resource among the skills if the resource serves the work item from the goal allocation.

9. **(previously amended)** A method of selecting a resource for a work item, comprising:

determining available resources that possess skills needed by the work item;

for each of the determined resources, determining a business value comprising a sum across all skills of a product of a skill level of the resource in the skill and a skill weight of the work item for the skill;

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for each of the determined resources, determining a resource treatment value, the resource treatment value being a measure of how the resource is spending time compared with other resources and goals of the individual resource, the resource treatment value comprising a sum across all resource treatments of a product of a value of the resource for the resource treatment and a weight of the work item for the resource treatment; and

selecting a determined resource that has a best combined score of its business value and its resource treatment value, to serve the work item

10. **(original)** The method of claim 9 wherein:

the resource treatments of a resource comprise a time since the resource became available, a time that the resource has spent not serving work items, and a measure of an effect that serving the work item would have on a goal of the resource.

11. **(original)** The method of claim 9 wherein:

determining a business value comprises

determining a scaled business value comprising the business value scaled by a first scaling factor that is common to all of the determined

resources;

determining a resource treatment value comprises

for each resource treatment, determining a scaled value of the resource comprising the value of the resource for that resource treatment scaled by a scaling factor that is common for that resource treatment to all of the determined resources, and

determining a scaled resource treatment value comprising a sum, scaled by a second scaling factor that is common to all of the determined resources, across all resource treatments of a product of the scaled value of the resource for the resource treatment and a weight of the work item for the resource treatment; and

selecting comprises

selecting a determined resource that has a best sum of its scaled business value and its scaled resource treatment value to serve the work item.

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12. **(original)** The method of claim 11 wherein:

each scaling factor comprises a fraction having in its denominator a maximum value of the value to which said scaling factor applies of any of the resources.

13. **(previously amended)** A method of selecting a work item for a resource, comprising:

determining available work items that need skills possessed by the resource;

for each of the determined work items, determining a business value of having the resource service the work item, the business value being a measure of qualification of the resource for servicing of the work item based on skills of the resource and skill requirements of the work item;

for each of the determined work items, determining a value to the

work item of being serviced by the resource, the value to the work item being a measure of how the work item is treated compared to other work items and treatment goals of the individual work item; and

selecting a determined work item that has a best combined value of the business value and the value to the work item to be served by the resource.

14. **(original)** The method of claim 13 wherein:

determining business value comprises

determining the business value weighted by a business value weight corresponding to the work item;

determining a value to the work item comprises

determining the value to the work item weighted by a work item value weight corresponding to the work item; and

selecting comprises

selecting a determined work item that has a best combined value of the weighted business value and the weighted value to the work item.

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15. **(original)** The method of claim 14 wherein:

determining a business value comprises

determining a weighted business value as a product of (a) the business value weight corresponding to the work item and (b) a sum of products of a level of each said needed skill of the resource and a weight of said needed skill of the work item; and

determining a value to the work item comprises

determining a weighted work item treatment value as a product of (c) a work item treatment weight corresponding to the work item and (d) a sum of products of each treatment of the work item and a weight of said treatment of the work item.

16. **(original)** The method of claim 15 wherein:

the sums of products are scaled sums, and

the treatments are scaled treatments.

17. **(original)** The method of claim 16 wherein:

selecting comprises

selecting the determined work item that has a highest sum of the weighted business value and the weighted work item treatment value.

18. **(original)** The method of claim 15 wherein:

the work item treatments of a work item comprise a time that the work item has been waiting for service and an estimated time that the work item will have to wait for service.

19. **(original)** The method of claim 18 wherein:

the treatments of a work item further comprise a time by which the work item has exceeded its target wait time.

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20. **(original)** The method of claim 18 wherein:

the estimated wait time that the work item will have to wait for service comprises a product of (a) a ratio of a total number of work items waiting for service and an average number of work items waiting for service and (b) a sum of average wait times of individual said needed skills each weighted by a ratio of the weight of said individual skill and a sum of the weights of the needed skills.

21. **(previously amended)** A method of selecting a work item for a resource, comprising:

determining available work items that need skills possessed by the resource;

for each of the determined work items, determining a business value comprising a sum across all skills of a product of a skill level of the resource in the skill and a skill weight of the work item for the skill;

for each of the determined work items, determining a work item